

Motor Vehicle Accidents

4. Cerebrovascular Disease
5. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
(Includes bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma)

These are consistent with the leading causes of death across the state of Tennessee, as well as the United States.

Teen Pregnancy

Teen pregnancy in Lewis County increased from 1994 (with a rate of 52.9) to 1996 (with a rate of 87.4) per 1,000 females aged 15-17 years. Tennessee's teen pregnancy rate continues to decline. The rate decreased 3% from 1992 to 1994. The problem of teen pregnancy is compounded by misconceptions. A prevalent one is that it is an adolescent problem when in fact it is an adult problem since 74% of the men involved in the pregnancies among women under 18 were not teens; 35% are aged 18-19, and 39% are at least 20, according to the 1995 Guttmacher study on *Sex and America's Teenagers*. Teens are more likely than older women to have babies whose health is compromised at birth due to inadequate prenatal care. Low birth weight is more common to infants of teens than among babies born to women in their 20s. Teenagers who become parents are disadvantaged socially, economically and educationally.

Birth Data

Infant mortality (deaths within the first year following birth) and births to infants that are low-weight are important indicators of a community's health status.

Through presentations by the Community Development staff, the Health Council learned that in Lewis County, there were no infant deaths to the babies born to mothers ages 10-14 from 1992-1994. This is true for the South Central Region as well. Statewide the infant mortality rate (infant deaths per 1,000 live births) was highest in the 10-14 years age group followed by the 15-17 years age group. In Lewis County the infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births in 1996 was 15.5, which was lower than the rate for 1992 (23.6) but higher than in 1994 (0.0). The infant mortality rate for the state in 1996 was 9.3 and for the region was 8.9.

Low birthweight is a major problem in Lewis County for teen mothers, especially those 10-14 years. There were no low birthweight babies born from 1992-1994 to mothers in this age group. In the 15-17 years age group in the county 3.7% of all live births were low weight babies. The average for the state during the same reporting period was 11.9% and the average for the region was 8.5%. The low birthweight for all ages from 1992-1994 was 5.0% for Lewis County, 7.8% for the South Central Region, and 8.7% for the state.